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April 1, 2004

## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Interested parties are invited to submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) to provide professional services to the San Francisco Bay Area Wetlands Restoration Program (Program). At this time, we are requesting assistance for several positions that will serve as project-specific wetlands monitoring plan reviewers of behalf of the Program's Monitoring Group. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the San Francisco Estuary Project (SFEP) provide fiscal, contract management and administrative services to the Wetlands Restoration Program. Any contract resulting from this solicitation will be negotiated by ABAG and SFEP and administered by ABAG.

### **I. Background**

The SFEP was created in 1987 under the Clean Water Act's National Estuary Program. It is a cooperative effort to promote effective management of the Bay-Delta Estuary and to restore and maintain its water quality and natural resources. Representatives from the public, all levels of government, and elected officials from all twelve Bay-Delta counties, are working together to implement the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP), which was completed in 1993. The plan recommends specific corrective actions, monitoring programs and research goals aimed at resolving the Estuary's most critical problems.

The CCMP includes more than one hundred recommended actions aimed at improving the health and long-term viability of the Estuary, including numerous actions that are specific to wetlands restoration. One of these actions led to the production of the 1999 *Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals*. The *Goals* report recommends needed habitat changes and identifies a number of deficiencies that hinder the way habitat projects are designed, implemented and monitored. From the *Goals* Report came the San Francisco Bay Area Wetlands Restoration Program. The Program is a partnership of public agencies working to implement wetlands action items from the CCMP and the recommendations of the *Goals* report. The Program seeks to fill programmatic gaps and improve coordination among resource agencies, regulatory agencies, and programs and groups that plan or implement wetlands habitat projects.

The Program is composed of four groups: Executive Council, Coordinating Committee, the Design Review Group and the Monitoring Group. Each group has a unique set of responsibilities and role in the function of the Program. At this time, the Program is inviting SOQs from those interested in assisting the Monitoring Group. The Monitoring Group includes technical staff from the Executive Council members' agencies as well as various technical experts. The Monitoring Group provides a forum where wetlands monitoring issues are shared and discussed; this forum advances the region's understanding of habitat project successes and failures. Overall, the Monitoring Group is fostering the development of a regional wetlands monitoring program. Components

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of the monitoring program do and will include the development of standardized wetlands monitoring protocols and the provision of a publicly available, project mapping website. At present, the Monitoring Group has secured funding to begin staffing monitoring plan review teams. The teams will be similar in function to the Design Review Teams of the Program's Design Review Group. For additional information on the Design Review Group and its function, please see [www.sfwetlands.ca.gov/DRGbio.html](http://www.sfwetlands.ca.gov/DRGbio.html)

The group meets approximately between once every two months and once per quarter and is chaired by one of its members. The Group chairperson prepares agendas for these meetings in consultation with the Program Coordinator, the Coordinating Committee and the Monitoring Group members. The geographic scope of projects submitted to these groups encompasses habitats associated with San Francisco Bay and its immediate watershed. Habitat projects upstream from the eastern edge of Suisun Marsh (i.e., eastward from the city of Pittsburg) are considered to be the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta and fall outside of the purview of the Restoration Program.

## **II. Services Required**

The applicant should possess considerable knowledge of wetlands project monitoring guidelines and protocols, the implementation process of habitat projects in the Bay Area and project pre-construction design principles. Applicants are required to have an understanding of the Baylands ecosystem and associated habitats, and be readily able to consider project monitoring in a regional context. The Program seeks to staff its monitoring plan review teams with experts from local government, special districts, non-governmental organizations, academia, and the private sector. Only employees of regulatory agencies (i.e., agencies that issue permits) are not permitted to participate on monitoring plan review teams. It is expected that applicants will be technical experts in their respective fields with experience as, for example, biologists, ecologists, hydrologists, and/or engineers with a reasonable degree of familiarity in designing, implementing, and evaluating habitat restoration project's post-construction monitoring plans.

The Monitoring Group is specifically tasked with undertaking the following duties:

1. Develop criteria for selecting technical experts who will assist in the review of monitoring plans.
2. Establish criteria for selecting proposed habitat projects for review.
3. Ultimately, take lessons learned from monitoring plan review and use this information to support adaptive management of habitat projects.
4. At the end of the year, work with the Coordinating Committee and the Program Coordinator to prepare progress reports for the Executive Council.

Monitoring Plan Review Teams will be specifically tasked with undertaking the following duties:

1. Review preliminary or established monitoring plans and provide guidance and recommendations for improving project monitoring to the project sponsor; provide additional guidance as the project progresses.

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2. Work with the Program Coordinator to prepare a written assessment for each monitoring plan it reviews.
  3. Identify policy issues that may potentially impede comprehensive and successful wetlands monitoring efforts and, as needed, refer them to the Coordinating Committee.

Please see Attachment 1 - Statement of Work for requisite tasks and qualifications.

### **III. Compensation**

A flat rate of \$75 per hour will be paid to those applicants selected to participate as members of the Monitoring Group, up to a ceiling maximum of 33 hours per year. Opportunity exists to work beyond 33 hours per year and, should project demands require this, a contract will then be required between the review team member and ABAG. The applicant can be a self-employed contractor or the employee of any consulting firm or non-governmental organization. No benefits are provided. All services will be paid for on an hourly basis with other direct costs to be billed on an as expended basis. Contractor is responsible for payment of applicable state and federal taxes. Contractor must provide the necessary office space and equipment to perform required work.

Please note an applicant may elect to volunteer their services on monitoring plan review teams. If an applicant is interested in performing this work on a pro bono basis, please note this within the Cover Letter of the Statement of Qualifications. Questions about this can be directed to John Brosnan, Program Coordinator, at (510) 622-5048.

### **IV. Time Frame**

This solicitation is for part-time work on an as-needed basis. The term of service is dependent upon available funding.

### **V. Pre-qualified List**

Based on the quantified numerical scores of submittals made in response to this request, and the numerical rating of contractors invited to interview, the Program will maintain a pre-qualified list of finalists. Monitoring plan review teams will be staffed by those listed on the pre-qualified list; a candidate is added to a team based on their expertise and the needs and nature of the project.

### **VI. Selection Procedure**

Our objective is to obtain the highest qualified candidate to achieve the objectives within a realistic time frame and reasonable cost. Every submittal will be evaluated according to the criteria below. Numerical scores will be tabulated for each offer.

- 1) Relevant Qualifications and Experience - The Contractor will be evaluated

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based on the level of experience and background in performance of similar projects/programs.

2) Educational and Professional Background- The Contractor must possess the educational requirements listed in the Statement of Work.

3) Submittal - The Contractor will be evaluated based on the adequacy of the submittal to respond to the goals and objectives of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Statements must respond to all the requirements of the RFQ, and must include all information specifically required in all sections of the RFQ.

The names of the highest-ranking candidates will be added to the pre-qualified list. This RFQ does not commit ABAG to award a contract. Applications will only be considered for the Pre-Qualified List at this time. When services are required, a contract will be negotiated. Applicants are informed that the award of any contract as the result of this solicitation is contingent upon the availability of funds and unless an agreement can be secured for all general and special contract provisions.

## **VII. What to Submit**

To provide an objective, fair review of all statements of qualifications, the submittals are to include only the following information:

1) Cover Letter - The Cover Letter, covering highlights and unique features of your qualifications, should provide a definitive statement of qualifications allowing the candidate to accomplish the requirements as stated in this RFQ. This must describe in detail the procedures and methods that will be used to achieve the stated needs outlined in the Statement of Work, preferably drawing on past experience/work conducted by the applicant. Finally, the Cover Letter should detail your specific expertise and preferences as relates to the Monitoring Plan Review component of the Program. Please note any specialized experience you might possess relative to specific habitat types, i.e., tidal marsh, riparian woodlands, salt ponds, etc.

Any special terms and conditions related to this request should also be summarized in this portion of the statement. Letter should include your office address. Length: **Two (2) pages maximum (40 points possible)**.

2) Relevant Experiences and Educational and Professional Background - Provide a **resume or summary of relevant experience** and a summary of educational background, including degrees. Also include special professional and/or project experience as well as any relevant publications. Length: **Two (2) pages maximum (20 points possible)**.

3) List of Client References - Provide a list of clients to be used as references for your work, including contact name, address, telephone number, nature of job,

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length of engagement, amount (e.g. 1 year, \$ 35,000). Length: **One (1) page maximum (10 points possible).**

Responding to all requirements set forth within this Request for Qualifications is worth a maximum of 10 points; assessment of the applicant's overall expected ability to provide high-quality feedback on wetlands monitoring plans is worth 20 points. Successful applicants must achieve 70 out of a possible 100 points in order to be placed on the pre-qualified list. We require three (3) copies of your statement package. **This Statement of Qualifications is open on a continuous filing and applications may be submitted at any time.** Questions may be directed to John Brosnan, Wetlands Restoration Program Coordinator, at (510) 622-5048; fax (510) 622-2501; e-mail [jtb@rb2.swrcb.ca.gov](mailto:jtb@rb2.swrcb.ca.gov).

#### **VIII. Where to Submit Application**

If mailed, address to:

John Brosnan  
Wetlands Restoration Program Coordinator c/o  
San Francisco Estuary Project  
1515 Clay Street, Suite 1400  
Oakland, CA 94612-1413  
[jtb@rb2.swrcb.ca.gov](mailto:jtb@rb2.swrcb.ca.gov)

If hand delivered:

John Brosnan  
Wetlands Restoration Program Coordinator c/o  
San Francisco Estuary Project  
1515 Clay Street, Suite 1400  
Oakland, CA 94612-1413  
[jtb@rb2.swrcb.ca.gov](mailto:jtb@rb2.swrcb.ca.gov)

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## **Attachment 1 - Statement of Work**

### **Monitoring Plan Review Team Member**

The applicant will be asked to perform the following functions as required for reviewing wetlands monitoring plans and for preparing summary findings reports for the project proponent:

- Attend Monitoring Group and/or project review-specific meetings and review project materials as needed to effectively provide comments.
- Review preliminary or established monitoring plans and provide guidance and recommendations for improving project monitoring to the project sponsor; provide additional guidance as the project progresses.
- Work with the Program Coordinator to prepare a written assessment for each monitoring plan it reviews.
- Identify policy issues that may potentially impede comprehensive and successful wetlands monitoring efforts and, as needed, refer them to the Coordinating Committee.

### **Qualifications**

Candidates for this work should have many of the following qualifications:

- Graduate degree in a physical or biological science (desirable, not required).
- Experience in field and analytical studies.
- Ability to work closely with scientists and managers.
- Familiarity with the San Francisco Bay/baylands habitats system.
- Writing experience as demonstrated through reports and publications.
- Possess demonstrated experience in editing technical and other documents.

### **Work Schedule**

The workload is variable and largely unpredictable and will depend solely on the quantity of proposed projects coming into the Monitoring Group. In some instances there may be several weeks of work in a row and then nothing for several weeks. Work hours are flexible and team members rely primarily on email to transmit documents.

### **Supervision**

The Program Coordinator directs, reviews and edits group reports. Selected applicants shall submit deliverables as well as invoices of direct costs, overhead and direct cost expenditures to the Coordinator.